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Lebanon

Israeli Withdrawal Decision — The Israeli Cabinet approved the defense establishment's proposal to begin withdrawing from Lebanon in three main phases, Jerusalem television announced at the end of the Cabinet session on 14 January. In the first phase, which will be implemented within 5 weeks, the IDF will evacuate the Sidon area and deploy in the Al-Litani River-Al-Nabatiyah area. The second withdrawal will be in the eastern sector, where the IDF will deploy around Hasbaiya; while in the third phase the IDF will withdraw to the international border, while still providing support for the army of southern Lebanon which will continue to operate in part of the south. Commenting on the decision in a television interview,Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin noted that the withdrawal will enable the IDF to practice a mobile and "aggressive" system of defense in which it will enjoy full freedom to take preemptive action against any attempt by the "terrorists" to reorganize in southern Lebanon. Each stage of the withdrawal will be short enough to preclude any need to fortify the IDF lines and long enough to give Lebanon and Syria a chance to ensure an "orderly arrangement" in the south. Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres asserted in remarks broadcast by Jerusalem radio. He also confirmed that Israel would welcome UNIFIL's deployment in the areas evacuated by the IDF. Defense Minister Rabin suggested UNIFIL's deployment in these areas during talks with visiting UN Under Secretary Brian Urquhart, who said he will approach the Security Council to discuss an amendment to UNIFIL's mandate in this regard, according to the radio.

Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, one of six Likud ministers who opposed the Cabinet decision, subsequently told Jerusalem radio that he could not support a withdrawal proposal that was "unbalanced" because of its failure to provide "minimum security arrangements" for Israel's Galilee settlements. Shamir said that he and his colleagues will attempt in forthcoming months to amend the withdrawal arrangements in order to rectify this deficiency.

Security Situation — In Beirut, the Islamic Jihad organization claimed responsibility for killing two French military observers who were ambushed in the southern suburbs, contending that they were spies, Paris radio reported. The Jihad group also warned that it will try the five Americans it is holding as spies who will "get the punishment they deserve," according to AFP.

Iran-Iraq War

The Iraqi Air Force attacked another ship in the Gulf on 14 January, hitting a "large maritime target" near Khark Island, Iraq announced in a military communique broadcast by Baghdad Voice of the Masses radio. The communique stated that all Iraqi planes returned safely to base, and an Iraqi military spokesman cited by INA subsequently denied an IRNA report that the Iranian Air Force downed an Iraqi plane in a dogfight over the Gulf around the same time. Earlier, Iranian aircraft raided another target inside Iraq, inflicting "considerable casualties" and destroying a radar station in a strike on the Rawanduz barracks in northeastern Iraq, according to an Iranian communique reported by IRNA.

Commenting on the recent intensification of the air war, the Iranian Air Force commander warned that Iran will react firmly to any future Iraqi air attacks on Iranian residential areas, adding that Iran has the capability to bomb "any point" inside Iraq, IRNA reported.

Kuwait

Kuwait has sent military cadres to the Soviet Union for training in the use of SAM-8 missiles, and to Egypt for training with shoulder-fired SAM's, the commander of the Kuwaiti Army's air defenses disclosed in a press interview cited by KUNA.

Western Sahara

A Moroccan Information Ministry communique, cited by Rabat radio, claimed that Saharan troops suffered heavy losses before fleeing in their 12 January attack. The Moroccan communique admitted that an F-1 plane was shot down by a missile launched from a neighboring country. Meanwhile, an SDAR Information Ministry communique stated that two more Moroccan aircraft were shot down on 13 January, according to Algiers radio.

Afghanistan

The DRA issued two strong protests, reported by Kabul radio, against 10 January Pakistani and Iranian "aggressions." The DRA accused Pakistani border militia of shelling Chamkani and Bangash residential areas, and blamed Iran for an airspace violation over Nimruz Province.

Pakistan

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